

CAROL DODA
TOPLESS at the
CONDOR

LOGLINE

CAROL DODA TOPLESS AT THE CONDOR tells the extraordinary story of the nation's first topless entertainer. She not only made history, she became a San Francisco tourist attraction second only to the Golden Gate Bridge.





SYNOPSIS

CAROL DODA TOPLESS AT THE CONDOR is a feature-length documentary set in San Francisco starting in 1964 when Carol Doda became the first dancer in the nation to perform topless. Wearing fashion designer Rudi Gernreich's monokini swimsuit, she danced on top of a white baby grand piano that descended from the ceiling of the Condor Club in North Beach. She then embarked on experimental silicone injections that increased her bust line from 32" to 44".

Her performance sparked a heated debate on indecent exposure in a public spaces. The ensuing arrests and trials ignited a fire that fueled the sexual revolution, and reshaped societal attitudes towards nudity and sexual expression.

Carol Doda went on to become a tourist attraction second only to the Golden Gate Bridge and an enduring name in entertainment history.





DIRECTOR BIOS

MARLO MCKENZIE is a writer and director based in California. She's the director of the upcoming documentary MY SECRET COUNTRY. Previously she worked on BUTTERFLY TOWN, USA and STANDING ON SACRED GROUND. She believes that story can change the world, and to create a better world we must first be able to imagine it.

JONATHAN PARKER is a writer-director based in San Rafael, CA. His remarkable feature film work includes BARTLEBY, which was the Opening Night Selection at the New Directors/New Films Festival at MOMA in New York and was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at Deauville. It was also an official selection at South by Southwest, Karlovy Vary, Seattle, Munich and Jerusalem film festivals. (UNTITLED) won the Grand Jury Prize at the Mannheim Film Festival and Best American Film at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. It was an official selection at the San Francisco and Palm Springs Film Festivals. THE ARCHITECT was an official selection at Mill Valley, Seattle, Vancouver, Seoul, and Rio de Janeiro film festivals.





WHAT DOES SEXUAL FREEDOM LOOK LIKE?



The far-reaching consequences of the 1960s sexual revolution continue to reverberate in the lives of women today. The question of what sexual freedom truly entails for women remains a subject of intense and essential debate. This topic is not only necessary but also central for each woman to explore independently, enabling her to embrace and assert her own sexual agency.

Carol's prominent role as a cultural figure, spanning a lifelong journey in adult entertainment as a performer, phone sex operator, and lingerie store owner, provides an ideal context to explore these crucial issues and the questions raised.

Was Carol a pioneering figure for women, a liberator ahead of her time who reclaimed her body in an empowering manner? Or was she pandering to the male gaze, manipulated by club owners and promoters who capitalized on her notoriety for their own gain? Perhaps the truth lies in a combination of the two.

STRIPPERS DANCE IN TOPLESS BATHING SUITS Until The Cops Decide That They're Obscene

"It's an art form," nightclub managers protested. "It's lewd and obscene," civic leaders stated.

Carol Dots didn't offer her opinion. She just kept dancing "the swim" on nightclub stages—in a topless bathing suit.

At the request of civic groups in San Francisco, police went to see the performance of Carol and other girls in a dozen nightclubs in the notorious North Beach area.

And the cops agreed with the civic leaders — "The swim" was lewd and obscene. So they arrested Carol and 14 other dancers for indecent exposure. Twelve club managers and owners were also picked up. They were charged with "outraging public decency."

But the public seemed to be more outraged at the police action.

The well-dressed patrons of the club where Carol was performing, shouted, "We want Carol," as three burly cops led the 22-year-old blonde away.

"It's really very artistic," one of the club's customers said when asked to describe Carol's dance. "She's a very graceful girl. She comes out on stage and starts to move her body like she's swimming. Sort of like the side stroke, only straight ahead. If you know what I mean. Then she moves her hands out in front of her. The hands tell a lot if you watch them. But I can see why someone might think the dance is lewd and obscene — if they think like that," the customer admitted.

Gino DelPrete, Carol's boss, couldn't understand why she was arrested.

"She does a real pretty dance," he said. "It's just like you find in Las Vegas and many other parts of the country. There's nothing wrong with it. She wasn't really entirely topless either because she wore a thin mesh."

The manager of another club who had two of his girls arrested on the Dec. 27th raid, declared:

"We'll fight this to the federal courts, you just wait and see."

He then told the police that from then on his waitresses would be asked from the waist up in the daytime.

Police refused to comment on this but they did promise "more raids if necessary."

"I don't think there's any-



CAROL PROTESTS LOUDLY to the police inspector (left) as he stops her act at the Condor Club. "What mean 'indecent,'" she screams (right), and put a hand to her head.



CAROL DOTS — police stopped her dance. They said it "outraged public decency."



BABY JANE DUNN was also booked by police appearing in one of North Beach's "Topless Swim" Clubs.

thing wrong in what we're doing," one of the dancing girls said. "The dance is kind of silly—not really a dance at all. I just get up on stage

and make like I'm swimming. But if people want to watch it — why shouldn't they? It doesn't hurt anybody. I'll bet the people who

complained about it never even saw it. They just think you could see a girl's arse. Times change."

"Well — fifty years ago



THE PARTICIPANTS



JERRY MARTINI
Musician, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

BENITA MATTIOLI
Author of *Three Nights at the Condor*

PETE MATTIOLI
Former Condor Club Owner

DINA MOORE
Carol Doda's Cousin

SARAH THORNTON
Sociologist of Culture, Author

WEDNESDAY MARTIN
Cultural Critic, Author

JOHN BURTON
Former U.S. Congressman, Bartender

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

JONATHAN PARKER & MARLO MCKENZIE

The origin of CAROL DODA TOPLESS AT THE CONDOR goes back 25 years to a narrative feature project Jonathan Parker worked on with Carol, herself. They met when she opened a lingerie shop in a building he managed on Union Street in San Francisco after she retired from dancing. She had a number of enterprises going at that time - the lingerie shop, TeleDoda sex talk phone lines, a nightclub singing career, and various personal appearances.

Jonathan was struck by the hands-on entrepreneurial spirit of this famous ex-topless dancer and became curious about her story, and the bizarre confluence of random events in 1964 that led to her career – a piano that descended from the ceiling of a nightclub, a topless swimsuit, the Swim dance, and the Republican National Convention.

As a budding filmmaker, he floated the idea of a movie of her life. “It better be a comedy,” she advised. He accompanied her to gigs over a period of months and even performed jazz standards with her on club dates. One memorable MC appearance was at a transvestite ball attended by three hundred men in ball gowns. Although the film project did not come to fruition at that time, Jonathan’s fascination with her story remained.

When Marlo McKenzie partnered with Jonathan she became interested in reviving the Carol Doda project. At the same time, a new book written by Benita Mattioli, wife of Pete Mattioli, one of the original owners of the Condor Club where Carol first danced topless was released. The time for the story had come. Marlo and Jonathan then embarked on interviewing club owners, dancers, musicians, bartenders and cocktail waitresses who worked on Broadway Street in San Francisco during the 60s, capturing their stories on film to bring this unique moment in San Francisco’s history to life.

THE TEAM



Produced, written and directed by
MARLO MCKENZIE AND JONATHAN PARKER

Producers
LARS ULRICH AND VINCE PALOMINO

Executive Producer
RICK MORSE

Editor
JENNIFER J. MAYER

Original Music
JACK DOUGLAS

Directors of Photography
MARLO MCKENZIE AND PATRICK FOGARTY

CONTACT US

PARKER

PARKER FILM COMPANY

info@parkerfilmcompany.com

415-601-9441

© 2023 Parker Film Company

